

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed August 12, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1, 3, 13, 21, 23, 27, 29, 30, 33, and 35 have been amended. Claims 1-43 are pending in this application, with claims 1 and 27 being the only independent claims. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed August 12, 2004, the disclosure is objected to because there is missing material between the end of page 14 and beginning of page 15. The specification has now been amended to include the missing information. The missing information states that "The A/V appliances 2-7 transmit information about their available A/V presentations via the optical network 1. The information includes an individual name for the". It is respectfully submitted that this information is not new matter since it is disclosed in original claims 1 and 27 and page 4, lines 6-10.

Claim 30 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because there is insufficient antecedent basis for "the operating units". Dependent claim 30 has been amended to provide proper antecedent basis. In view of the amendments, the rejection of claim 30 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, should now be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17-21, 27-29, 32, and 34-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,574,514 (Tanihira) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,232,539 (Looney) and U.S. Patent No. 5,973, 722 (Wakai).

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,141,036 (Katayama).

Claims 7, 8, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,751,581 (Ishiguro).

Claims 9, 10, 24, 25, 31, and 38-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,526,581 (Edson).

Claims 22, 23, and 37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of WO 99/35009 (Beckert).

Claims 26 and 43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,157,725 (Becker).

Claims 13, 16, and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Tanihira, Looney, and Wakai in view of EP 0 560 593 (Kawamura).

Before discussing the cited prior art and the Examiner's rejections of the claims in view of that art, a brief summary of the present invention is appropriate. According to the present invention, a network 1 connects together a plurality of A/V appliances 2-7, a plurality of output units 8-11 and a control unit 8 (see page 14, lines 2-5 of the specification). The network may, for example, comprise an optical ring using Media Oriented Systems Transport (MOST) standard technology (page 14, lines 7-9). An operating unit 14, 15 is connected to the control unit 12 which allows the user to input commands and selections to the control unit 12 (page 14, lines 15-16; and page 16, lines 6-8).

Each of the A/V appliances 2-7 transmits information about the available A/V presentations on the particular A/V appliance to the control unit 12 which assigns the presentation to one or more classes (page 16, lines 4-6). The available classified A/V presentations are displayed on displays 16, 17 independent of the A/V appliances to which they are associated (page 16, lines 6-7). Fig. 2 shows an example of a display of the A/V presentations independent of the appliances.

The display shows the available classes "Station", "Type", "Reports", and "Title" (see page 18, lines 8-10). This type of display creates an appliance-independent user interface which allows a user to operate all appliances using one interface (page 19, lines 7-11). Fig. 3 shows a specific example of the present invention in which a user selects the "station" class. Within the station class, the available subclasses are TV and Radio. In Fig. 3 the "Radio" subclass is selected and stations FFH, HR1, HR2, HR3, and SWR3 are displayed as the available radio station presentations. These stations are listed independent of the A/V appliance on which they are available.

Independent claims 1 and 27 have each been amended to clarify that the control unit classifies the information received from the plurality of A/V appliances about the available A/V presentations and that the classified information about the available audio/video presentations is displayed independently of the audio/video appliances, thereby creating an appliance-independent user interface.

Neither Tanihara, Looney, nor Wakai disclose, teach, or suggest a system with a plurality of A/V appliances each having available A/V presentations, wherein the available A/V presentations are displayed independently of which A/V appliance the presentations are associated with, as expressly recited in each of independent claims 1 and 27.

Tanihara discloses an audio/video device for a communication system in which a plurality of audio/visual devices are interconnected by a bus. Fig. 2 of Tanihara shows a bus 71 connecting various A/V devices 31-36, 41, and 43. Tanihara also discloses how the controllers SCU 21 or commanders 11, 12 use addresses to communicate with the individual A/V devices (col. 6, line 57 to col. 7, line 57). However, Tanihara fails to teach or suggest the display of available A/V presentations independent of which A/V appliance the presentations are associated

with, as expressly recited in each of independent claims 1 and 27. In contrast, each commander includes keys for specifically selecting a source (see, e.g., col. 7, lines 46-57).

Looney discloses a music organizer for organizing music stored in a database. Looney discloses at col. 6, line 27 to col. 8, line 18 the method for categorizing and making available individual songs. At col. 6, lines 42-49, Looney discloses that the music to be categorized is played back, compressed and stored to a hard drive. The compressed music is then categorized (col. 50, lines 50-61). Accordingly, Looney discloses a method for categorizing music files, i.e., songs; and allowing a user to select music files for playback based on the category. Looney discloses that the music to be played back is contained in one database (col. 7, lines 50-57). Since the music to be played back is in one database, i.e., the system of Looney comprises only one A/V appliance. Accordingly, Looney fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a system with a plurality of A/V appliances, wherein the available A/V presentations are displayed independent of which A/V appliance the presentations are associated with, as expressly recited in each of independent claims 1 and 27.

Wakai also fails to teach or suggest this limitation. Wakai discloses a digital audio/visual on demand and broadcast distribution system. More specifically, Wakai discloses an in-flight entertainment system in which content to be stored is entered via floppy disk drive, CD ROM, or a magnetic tape drive (col. 6, lines 8-17). The content is stored to one of a plurality of head end servers 100 including a data server 102, a media controller 104, and media servers 106, 108 (see also col. 5, lines 35-50). The Office Action states that each server is considered to be a different source and that the media controller 104 maintains a list of all material independent of the source. However, even if the servers 102, 104, 106, and 108 are considered to be different sources, the server can not be considered different A/V appliances as recited in

independent claims 1 and 27, because Wakai states that the data server 102, the media controller 104, and the media servers 106, 108 are all components of a headend control system 101 which provides a centralized storage of content (col. 7, lines 13-17). Furthermore, col. 5, lines 55-58, of Wakai states that the number of media servers necessary depends on content storage requirements and the number of simultaneous streams to be provided. Accordingly, the head end server 100 are merely separate memories of an overall system and can not be considered individual A/V appliances.

Furthermore, Wakai discloses that the control data used to configure and control the in-flight system is loaded into the system through floppy disks (col. 12, line 66 to col. 13, line 6). Since control data used to configure and control the system is loaded onto the system, Wakai fails to disclose that a control unit classifies the available presentations. Since Wakai fails to disclose a system with a plurality of A/V appliances, Wakai fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the display of available A/V presentations independent of which A/V appliance the presentations are associated with, as expressly recited in each of independent claims 1 and 27.

Dependent claims 2-26 and 28-43, each being dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 27, are deemed allowable for the same reasons expressed above with respect to independent claims 1 and 27.

Dependent claims 13 and 33 each recite that the local area network comprises a ring network. It is respectfully submitted that neither Tanihira, Looney, nor Wakai disclose a ring network. Tanihira is the only reference which discloses a plurality of A/V appliances and fails to disclose that the bus 71 is a ring network. Furthermore, even though Looney and Wakai fail to disclose a plurality of A/V appliances, these reference also fails to teach or suggest a ring

network. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 13 and 33 are allowable for at least these additional reasons.

The application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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